

# Euro consolidation continues

The trend for distributors acquiring independent production companies is set to continue following deals involving two of Europe's largest programme sellers.

Granada International has acquired a stake in UK indie Mammoth Screen for £1 million (\$2m), while ZDF Enterprises, the commercial arm of the German public broadcaster, has bought a 50% stake in Munich-based producer Bavaria Fernsehproduktion.

ZDF Enterprises is now eyeing local formats companies. CEO Alexander Coridass said that it hoped to increase the proportion of commissions to the main channel from ZDF Enterprises-owned companies from 10% to nearer 30%.

Bavaria Fernsehproduktion produces shows including *The Storm of Love* and *The Rosenheim Cops* (pictured).

Meanwhile, GI's purchase of drama start-up Mammoth Screen, which is run by two former ITV drama commissioners, is unlikely to be its last such deal. However, managing director Nadine Nohr warned that it would not pay inflated prices to buy into produc-



**Bavaria Fernsehproduktion-produced 62x43mins drama *The Rosenheim Cops***

tion companies.

"There may be more [acquisitions], but we're not rushing out to buy," she says. GI has not announced any other deals but Nohr says: "There is a natural affiliation to English-speaking markets such as North America and Australia as well as Scandinavia."

Mammoth Screen already has two commissions from ITV, period dramas *Wuthering Heights* and *Lost in Austen*.

Dutch formats group Eyeworks has also been shopping. It has acquired Argentinian producer Cuatro Cabezas, which is responsible for news satire show *CQC* and hospital docu soap *E-24*.